

The Conch Call



Second QUARTER 2011

ST. GEORGE VILLAGE BOTANICAL GARDEN~CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & PRESERVATION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Garden Friends,

Even though summer has often been considered the "off-season" in the Caribbean, things certainly do not slow down at your Garden.

As the staff and volunteers here at SGVBG prepare for St. Croix's most popular summer festival, Mango Melee, we are also continuing to offer other quality programs and activities year-round. Programs like Second Saturdays, Grow and Learn, and Story Hour offer fun, engaging, and educational opportunities for visitors of all ages to enjoy the beautiful and historic setting of the Garden.

Of course, one never needs the excuse of an organized activity to enjoy the serene beauty of the grounds. In spite of the typically warmer weather, there are many cool and beautiful spots to retreat to and enjoy the sights of lush vegetation and flowers embowering the historic structures, the sounds of the birds, and the scents of tropical blooms. A personal favorite retreat is a teak garden bench shaded by a sculptured bottlebrush tree in the ruins of the sugar factory. Here you can sit and enjoy the view over a small water garden and beyond to the Bromeliad Garden and waterfall in the factory ruins.

Continued on Page 2

Mango Melee

Get Your Mango Mojo on at the 15th Annual Mango Melee & Tropical Fruit Festival



Sunday, June 26 noon-6pm

It's all about mangoes and tropical fruits!

This is a day for the entire family, with educational workshops, "Mango Dis Mango Dat" food competition, tasting of mango and tropical fruits, garden tours, craft vendors, farmers, nursery sales, fruit auction, mango and tropical fruit display, food, mango eating contest and live entertainment by DJ Swain and the Superior Court Rising Stars Steel Orchestra.

This year a new competition has been added the **MegaMini Mango Contest**. Bring your largest and/or smallest full (mature) mango and enter this fun-tastic new contest. Winners will receive bragging rights for one year as well as their own Mango Melee T-shirt. Winning mangos will be judged by weight.

Don't grow your own mangos? Don't despair - show off your culinary skills in the ever-popular Mango Dis Mango Dat cooking competition. There are four food categories and two divisions - professional and amateur - get cooking! Call 692-2874 for more information and an application.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Continued From Page 1

I invite everyone to come enjoy the tranquility of the Garden in the summer. As you enjoy this lush oasis, I would like to remind everyone that it is dedication and resilience that have made it possible to overcome the many challenges of catastrophic weather events, and ongoing limitations of financial and material resources. In order to continue caring for and interpreting the priceless heritage of this site we will need the continued support of our community in these increasingly difficult financial times.

Please take a moment to think about the significant role SGVBG plays in the historical, cultural, educational, horticultural, and social communities of the U.S. Virgin Islands. It will be only with your continued support that this vital resource will remain available. I encourage everyone to please be a part of that effort. Anything you can offer - from financial support to volunteering your time, skills, and efforts - will help ensure access to this priceless heritage for future generations.

Thank you,
David M. Hamada
Executive Director

LUNCH AT THE GARDEN



June 10th was the final Lunch at the Garden for the school year. Looking back over the last year we can all agree that the original goals were exceeded:

- Collaborate with Chef Anton Doos and the culinary students from St. Croix Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC) to provide a *prix fixe* luncheon for approximately 16 people at the Bodine Center on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Provide opportunity to students for elevating their skill level thru "gourmet lunches"

**"Without you guys we
wouldn't have fun"**

Ethan Wyatt, student

The lunches have proved to be exceedingly popular with the students as well as the guests which frequently numbered more than 40.

If you missed out this season, make sure the Garden has your email address so you will receive menus when the program resumes in the fall.



LIBRARY CORNER

Some recently cataloged books in the Library you might want to check out!!

- SB473.2.P42 Phillips, Sue. [*A Creative Step-by-Step Guide to Patio Gardening*](#). Surrey, England: Coombe Books, 1997. An excellent introduction to a wide range of patio gardening topics. Ideal for beginners. Packed with fresh ideas for creative planting schemes, from spring bulbs and roses to vegetables and bonsai trees
- RA1270.P4B73 1992. Briggs, Shirley A. [*Basic guide to pesticides : their characteristics and hazards*](#). Washington : Hemisphere Pub. Corp., c1992. A fitting tribute to the memory of Rachel Carson., this book covers all that people need to know about some 700 pesticides and their contaminants.
- QK484.F6W7 Williams, Winston. [*Floridas Fabulous Trees*](#). WorldWidrPubns,1985 (1985), The emphasis is on the beauty of spectacular flowering trees. Also included are photographs and information on common and exotic trees.
- QK99.G7 Sosa-Gomez, Reinaldo. [*Amazing power of healing plants*](#). Inter-American Division Publishing Association (2000). This book shows the medical properties of more than 150 of the world's most popular plants. It is written in clear and simple language. Each plant has an illustration that is a work of art, and helps in the identification of each plant.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Save this page as a reminder that you can change the future!



Leave a Living Legacy

St. George Village Botanical Garden would like you to consider a planned gift that will continue growing and bearing fruit into the future. Use of estate planning principles of planned giving is a technique that helps you maximize the benefits of present and future charitable giving that gives you a personal tax-favored benefit. It is done through advantageous tax treatment under Territorial, State and Federal law. All contributions to *St. George Village Botanical Garden* are tax deductible.

With careful planning, it is possible to reduce income taxes, as well as capital gain and transfer taxes—including: gift, estate, inheritance and generation-skipping taxes. You can enjoy these tax savings while turning appreciated assets into an income for yourself and others. Planned giving is a tool that helps you benefit the on-going programs of *St. George Village Botanical Garden* and enhance your financial plans and security.

The following are suggested means for consideration; but are not to be considered as legal or financial advice. The only way for you to determine if these or any other charitable giving tools are appropriate for you is to consult a financial or legal adviser.

Charitable Bequest

Bequests by Will are the most common planned gifts. A bequest is especially appropriate if the donor wishes to retain full control of property during their life while leaving a legacy to *St. George Village Botanical Garden*. A donor can make a specific dollar bequest or give a percentage of an estate as part of their Last Will and Testament. Examples of such bequests are :

Percentage Bequest

"I give to *St. George Village Botanical Garden* ___% of my estate."

General Bequest

"I give to *St. George Village Botanical Garden* the sum of \$____."

Residuary Bequest

"I give to *St. George Village Botanical Garden* the rest, residue and remainder of my estate."

Contingent Bequest

"If (name of beneficiary) predeceases me or disclaims any interest in my estate, I give such property to *St. George Village Botanical Garden*."

Similar provisions can be incorporated into living trusts and special charitable lead or remainder trusts.

Other Gifts:

The same purposes can be achieved through other tools of wealth management and disposition including life insurance policies, retirement accounts, and annuities.

Cash Donations: And there's always appreciation for current cash donations to assist the programs of the Garden. There is no better time to help *St. George Village Botanical Garden* so please consider a cash charitable donation. Your contribution is tax deductible and greatly appreciated.

Please see your financial or legal advisor for more specific information on any of these types of donations. This suggestion for consideration shall not be considered legal or financial advice.



HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW? EDUCATION AND TIPS FROM JENN TRAVIS

Get Outside: Explore Seeds

Did you know there are over 350,000 seed-producing plants in the world? There are many seed producers at the Garden. Pick a sunny day this summer to discover the splendid world of seeds with your favorite young person. Here are a few activities you can try.

First, what are seeds? Seeds are one way that plants can reproduce or create baby plants. When a flower on the parent plant is pollinated by insects, animals, or wind, a fruit develops. A fruit is a suitcase for seeds! Seeds must travel away from the parent plant to find the right combination of sun, water, and nutrients to grow. Seeds travel in many ways. In seed producers like the Sandbox tree, the fruit dries up and forcefully expels the seeds. In other plants such as mangos and apples, the fruit is eaten by animals and the seed is dispersed as the animals wander. Other fruits are shaped like wings and use wind; some fruits float long distances in water. Some fruits hitchhike on moving animals by attaching to fur or feathers. Finally, some plants use gravity and simply drop seeds onto the ground. However a seed moves around, when it finds the right conditions, it will grow into a new plant.



You can find an example of all the ways seeds disperse at the Garden. First, look for the Sandbox tree (*Hura crepitans*).

This is the tree with the spiky trunk you can find along the Rainforest trail; it has explosive seeds! Sometimes called the Monkey Pistol tree, the woody seed capsule bursts into fifteen sections when dry and powerfully ejects the seeds into the air. In the late spring, you can hear loud popping sounds from above as the seedpods burst; it sounds like a monkey is sitting in the tree with a cap gun! Find some opened seed pods under the Sandbox tree.

Look for more seeds. Discover how each seed moves away from its parent plant. You have observed a plant that explodes its seeds. Find seeds that stick to animal fur. Put some thick, cotton socks over your shoes while you walk around. When you stop to rest, inspect the items stuck to your socks. These seeds grab on to and hitchhike

on animal fur or feathers to move away from the parent plant. Take a walk through the Medicinal Herb Garden, and you will see lots of Spanish Needle (*Bidens alba*) seeds on your sock. Touch them; these seeds have sticky, glue like substance covering one end.

Can you find edible fruits in the Garden? These plants make a healthy, tasteful fruit to entice animals to eat them. When an animal eats the fruit, they discard the seed away from the parent plant. Watch pearly-eyed thrashers eat berries; what happens to the seed inside that eaten berry? Where might it end up? When you eat a fruit, what do you do with the seeds? Think of a time you have helped a seed travel away from its parent plant.



Look for seeds that may be caught in the wind. These are generally small and papery or have wings. Shake a branch of the purple flowered Queen's Wreath (*Petrea volubilis*) growing over the ruins of one wall of an enslaved worker's cottage. How far did they go? Look for other seeds that are moved about by the wind.

Walk to the Fiber Garden and find a coconut palm. Did you know that coconuts can float for years in the vast oceans before landing on a beach and sprouting? In fact, scientists think coconuts populated the tropics simply by floating from their original location. Find some mangrove trees to inspect near the coastline—can you find the bean-like seeds of the red mangrove? These seeds must float for at least two weeks before they germinate, or begin to grow.

To cap your seed-filled day, build something beautiful with seeds. Tan-tan (*Leuccaena leucocephala*) is an invasive plant that grows wildly in the Virgin Islands. Gather some of the hanging, papery seedpods to observe the seeds inside. Glue the small, shiny seeds onto cardboard, driftwood, or a cigar box in patterns to create a beautiful mosaic. If you boil the seeds for a few minutes, they will fluff and soften so you can pierce the seed and string it to make necklaces or bracelets. Wear these the next time you explore the Botanical Garden.

WHAT A WONDERFUL EVENT

Past President Monette Booth capably chaired *Art in the Garden*, which took place March 26 & 27 and was a treat for all the senses. Twenty-one artists, St. Croix Bonsai Society, St. Croix Hibiscus Society and St. Croix Orchid Society combined their talents to fill the Great Hall with art and beautiful plants, some with fragrant blossoms. Violinist Brian Silber provided exquisite music during the Artists' Reception Saturday evening. Also on Saturday taste buds were treated to goodies homemade by the Palletteers and other volunteers. Sunday guests were able to enjoy lunch created by Chef Anton Doos and his culinary students from CTEC.

Phyllis Charles' stunning painting "St. George's Crotons" was used for the publicity, including the poster and T-shirts and was raffled at the conclusion of the weekend.

NURSERY NOOK

The Garden's Nursery is getting ready for the Mango Melee festivities to be held June 26th. We will be open from 11am-6pm. This year we are happy to announce that we have mango trees for sale. YES, you heard right - four named cultivars, including Julie and Carrie. In addition, we will have a brand new group of orchids. Our "special" sale will be crotons - buy two for the price of one. As always, the volunteers are ready to offer help to people in their planting needs.

Hope to see you soon at the Nursery.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Thank you to the current members of SGVBG Board of Governors for all their hard work:

President Sandi Savage, Vice President Larry Sickinger, Treasurer Sandy Radczenko, Secretary Carolyn Forno and members Nathan Bishop, Marilyn Chakroff, Susan Ladwig, Max McIntosh, Robert Quinn, and Nina York.

VALUED VOLUNTEERS LINDA & GARY DOTY

Hailing from the Finger Lakes Region of New York and the West End of St. Croix, Linda and Gary have been with us for the last 6 years. Linda, who at times is the Nursery's "social director", attends to the plants that are periodically placed throughout the Garden for various events. Her husband, Gary, has kept the Nursery from falling down from old age. He has constructed new plant benches, fixed old door frames, rebuilt our potting shed and has acted as our "go to" guy for projects. Linda and Gary are really great people and their volunteer efforts are greatly appreciated. We are pleased to have their support and recognize them as Valued Volunteers.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ART IN THE GARDEN SPONSORS:

A Better Copy *JKC Communications
A Friend * Gary M. Lalor

Caribbean Country 93.5 * Hovensa * Innovative * Marshall & Sterling * Plaza Extra * Francie Whittenburg



St. George Village
Botanical Garden

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
KINGSHILL, VI
PERMIT NO.40

127 Estate St. George, Frederiksted, VI 00840

Upcoming Garden Events

JUNE

26 Mango Melee/Nursery Sale Noon-6pm

JULY

2 StoryHour 10-10:30am

13 StoryHour 10-10:30am

9 2nd Saturday 9am-Noon

23 Grow & Learn 10am-Noon

AUGUST

6 StoryHour 10-10:30am

10 StoryHour 10-10:30am

13 2nd Saturday 9am-Noon

SEPTEMBER

3 StoryHour 10-10:30am

7 StoryHour 10-10:30am

10 2nd Saturday 9am-Noon

24 Grow & Learn 10am-Noon

Hours

Open Every day except Christmas; 9 am—5 pm
1/2 Price Admission for St. Croix Residents every
Sunday; STX Children (Under 12) Free on Sunday

HERBARIUM HOURS:

By appointment. Call 340.692.2874

LIBRARY HOURS:

Summer hours

By appointment. Call 340-718-4729

NURSERY HOURS:

Tuesday & Friday; 9 am-11am

MUSEUM HOURS:

Monday through Friday; 9 am – 5 pm, and on weekend
days when a cruise ship is in port.

MUSEUM STORE HOURS:

Monday through Saturday; 10 am – 4 pm,
And during special events.

Tel (340) 692-2874 * Fax (340) 692-6154
infoatthegarden@gmail.com
www.sgvbg.org